



Volunteer News

Quilt Conservation: Preservation is in the details

When thinking of the McLoughlin House, many things come to mind. From the beautiful furniture to the Tolmie library collection to the bear skin rug, the collections highlighted inside are unique and memorable. While not as visible as other collection items, the site also houses a wonderful textile collection.

Lately, these beautiful textiles have been undergoing a thorough examination by quilt and textile expert Eileen Trestain. Eileen's name may be familiar to many, as she coordinates the Period Clothing Program as a Volunteer-In-Parks at Fort Vancouver.

At the park's McLoughlin House unit, Eileen has been working with volunteer Joan Beck (who is also familiar with textiles, and working toward becoming a quilt appraiser herself) to not only assess the quilts, but also clean, conserve, and appraise them.

Eileen and Joan are also making sure the textiles are stored properly, rotating some of the more fragile textiles into storage from display, with a goal to accomplish an annual assessment and cleaning of these materials, with rotation from storage to display and vice versa.

Park staff and volunteers alike have learned a great deal about quilts and textiles just from observing Eileen and Joan do their work; some have also taken the next step and begun to share this information with the public in their talks and tours.



Volunteers Eileen Trestain and Joan Beck clean a circa 1790 calamanco quilt.

Most of the McLoughlin House textiles were donated over time to the site, and cover a wide range of time periods. The collection includes a lovely cream and indigo coverlet, hand-woven circa 1830-1850; a 1920s "broken dishes" pattern quilt; a "one-patch" baby quilt circa 1980 (that's right—1980); and an 1865 quilt with a variable star pattern. Some of the dates on these quilts are more precise based on information from the time of donation, but most of the dates are based on the fabric patterns and style of workmanship.

The oldest—and one of the most interesting—of the quilts is an indigo calamanco quilt, made circa 1790, and in excellent condition. Calamanco is glazed wool; the glaze was created by

rubbing the fabric with a stone or glass ball or the application of wax or egg white. Quilts of this type were made by professional quilters.

There are a number of interesting variables to consider when assessing textiles. Eileen and Joan use clean string to create a grid over the quilt or coverlet, and use the grid quadrants to analyze the condition of the quilt. Each stain, rip and discoloration is noted and written down on condition paperwork.

The cleaning process consists of first vacuuming dust and debris through a one millimeter grid and then brushing dust and larger debris from fragile textiles. There are many details to making sure that these quilts are preserved for future generations.

Superintendent's Corner

Partnership in action is what Fort Vancouver and the Vancouver National Historic Reserve are all about. I am pleased to share with you some of things that partnerships have offered over the last few months.

The **Vancouver National Historic Reserve Trust** will now manage the **Vancouver National Historic Reserve Visitor Center** sales area. This partnership opportunity is the prelude to a long lasting proactive relationship. As part of the Comprehensive Management Plan, completed in 2001, it identifies the Trust as the supporting non profit of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve. Being on-site, the Trust offers the Fort and the Historic Reserve direct benefits. As the sales area develops, you will begin to notice new items for sale as well as the rearrangement of the visitor center. Temporary interpretive and collections exhibits will be put up as an interim before the visitor center undergoes a transformation to update and modernize it slated within the next few years.

Other partnering activities include the work with the Engagé House reconstruction in the Village area, which involves the **University of Oregon** historical architect class and **North Cascades National Park**. This exciting project will bring to life the Village as it has never been done before. The first tangible piece of the story, the Engagé House, will allow visitors to better visualize what went on here in this area of the Fort. The opportunities are limitless and will continue to be as the **Land Bridge** project continues to take shape, a partnered project with the **City of Vancouver** and the non profit organization, **The Confluence Project**. It's expected to be completed this fall.

The **McLoughlin House** has been included in a pass system of historical venues within Oregon City. Visitors may purchase this pass, allowing them to visit all the venues participating in this new system. Although there is no charge to visit the McLoughlin House, our being listed on the pass allows us to be part of a bigger picture which is a in for the McLoughlin House and a win for the visitor.

There's never a dull moment as Fort Vancouver's partnerships continue to evolve in Vancouver and Oregon City. The many exciting projects and programs that are currently going on are only a fraction of what these partnerships have to offer in the future. There's much more to come!

See you soon,
Tracy Fortmann

Sharing the Fort Vancouver, McLoughlin House and Vancouver National Historic Reserve Stories On Your Own!

If you have had a chance to take a stroll along Officers Row or walk around the Vancouver Barracks, you may have noticed interpretive waysides popping up in strategic locations. There are 21 total, sharing with visitors the story of the Grant House, Marshall House, Howard House, Bandstand, Red Cross Building, and more. They are a site to behold as they tell first time visitors they have entered a special place, the Vancouver National Historic Reserve.

Other projects brewing are a walking tour brochure of Officers Row as well as numerous site bulletins. The walking brochure will share the overall history of the officers at Vancouver Barracks, their families, and servants. The site bulletins will focus specifically on the Marshall House, Grant House, and Howard House. The Restaurant at the Historic Reserve in the Grant House will take things one step further by offering history with every meal. The site bulletin text will be on the back of their menus. Guests at The Restaurant will have their questions answered *even* before their appetizers are served!

The McLoughlin House will be part of an Oregon City Historic Walking Tour. The National Park Service has been working with other historical venues in Oregon City to provide visitors a comprehensive picture of history in this town. The expected completion date is this summer.

Other ideas for waysides and site bulletins are many. They include one for the houses in the Village area, the Land Bridge, and the garden. Expanding the Champions of History series is also on the horizon.

The method in which we share history comes in many different ways. Waysides allow for visitors to take history in at their leisure while the site bulletins offer a bit of history to be taken home with them. What they offer to the Vancouver National Historic Reserve and the McLoughlin House is another way to hook visitors into learning more about these nationally significant sites.

Did you know we currently offer the following site bulletins to the public?

Japanese Castaways
National Park Service Collections
Archaeology at Fort Vancouver
Vancouver During World War II
The Company Village

Champions of History: Mayor Royce Pollard

Fort Vancouver Brochures are available in;
French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish,
Large Print and Braille

Stop by the Visitor Center for your copy!

First Volunteer Social brought sunshine in February! And more...

Aloha! Fort Vancouver had the opportunity to have Melia Lane-Kamahele, who was on a 2 month detail from Hawaii as the park's management assistant, be the speaker for the first Volunteer Social in 2007. On a cold February evening, Melia, brought sunshine to the Fort as she shared with us, the journey of the Hawaiians from Hawaii to the Pacific Northwest. This journey provided volunteers insight to the Hawaiian Culture as well as the migration patterns of the Hawaiians. She also shared with us the true meaning of ALOHA.

A 'aina, kai (link mauka/makai; importance of resources)

L lokah- (working together, strength, unity, respect, honesty, and integrity)

O 'ola (life, 'ohana, 'aiga)

H ha (corm of kalo, importance of family); hana lima kokua (working together and supporting each other)

A 'akua (powers that be in each of us, powers that are greater than us individually, and the powers that guide our lives)

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Day

June 3, 2007 1-3p.m.

@ Pearson Air Museum

We hope to see you there!

Please call the Visitor Center at 360.816.6230 to RSVP

If you know a friend who is interested in volunteering their skills at Fort Vancouver, please share with them the park's website for more details and an application. We will soon be posting positions available. In the meantime, what we have a need for are the following volunteer positions;

Gardeners for the Fort Vancouver Garden

Are you interested in lending your green thumbs to the Fort Vancouver Garden? A gardeners paradise, these

volunteers are needed to help with maintaining the gateway to the Fort. Contact Bill DeBerry, Historic Programs Coordinator, at 360.816.6247.

Living History Interpreter for Special Events

The first event of the season is just around the corner. We are looking for folks to portray trappers, voyegeurs and family members for this year's Brigade Encampment. Contact Kimm Fox-Middleton, Special Events Program Manager, at 360.816.6243

Administrative Assistant

The park headquarters is in need of volunteers who want to work a few hours a week. Duties would include clipping newspaper articles and filing. Contact Elaine Huff, Administrative Officer, at 360.816.6212.

There's more to come so keep a watch on the park's website and stay tuned!



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site is a premier historical and archaeological site that shares and preserves the history associated with the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Vancouver and the U.S. Army's Vancouver Barracks. A part of the Vancouver National Historic Reserve, we value working with partners and the public to bring this special history to life.

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www.nps.gov/fova

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

What's Up and Coming

60th Anniversary of Archaeology at Fort Vancouver- The hidden treasures of the Fort Vancouver collection will soon be available for all to enjoy all the time. A book is currently being worked on in celebration of 60 years of archaeology at Fort Vancouver. The book will highlight the collection that has grown exponentially over the past few years. Once only available by an appointment or on a collections tour, it will now be available for people to take home. The book will be on sale at the Visitor Center, allowing visitors to take a bit of Fort Vancouver home with them.

140th Anniversary of Base Ball event in Vancouver will kick off the base ball season on May 12. The goals for the event include the sharing of what Base Ball in the 1860's was like, recruiting potential historians-ball players for our summer games, and enjoying a little of America's pastime. A friendly match will be played which will allow the public to join in the fun. Prior to the match they will sit in on workshops to learn more about just how to play by 1860's rules. So please pass the word on about this new spin on a very old game!

Campfires and Candlelight: Night of the Shark!- Planning efforts continue for the park's signature event. For one night on September 15, from 4-10 p.m. visitors will experience Fort Vancouver and the Historic Reserve's history. Two planning meetings were offered allowing volunteers an opportunity to offer their ideas. Another is to be scheduled soon. Stay tune!



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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

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News You Can Use

Do you know about the **Interpretive Resource Center** (IRC) and the **Archives and Reference Center** (ARC)? These two wonderful resources are available for volunteers to use. The IRC offers volunteers a place to learn about the park, specifically for those volunteers who will be doing presentations or assisting visitors by providing information. Items include videos on blacksmithing, various interpretive programs, and other helpful items for volunteers. It is located downstairs in the office portion of the Indian Trade Shop.

The ARC, located upstairs of the Fur Store, provides materials that offer individuals an opportunity to dig deeper into Fort Vancouver's and the Reserve's past. Researchers use the facility who are interested in delving into a particular topic. The ARC is open to researchers by appointment.

To access either location, volunteers should have a current volunteer agreement and for the

ARC they will need to fill out a Volunteer Library Use form. If you are interested in learning more about these two locations, please speak with your supervisor. If you are interested in accessing the IRC, you may speak with **Park Guide Doug Halsey**, 360.816.6242 or Douglas.Halsey@nps.gov or the ARC contact **Curator Tessa Langford**, 360.816.6252 or Theresa.Langford@nps.gov or Museum Technician Heidi Pierson, 360.816.6255 or Heidi.Pierson@nps.gov.

Fort Vancouver hosted the **Children's Cultural Parade** this year. And what a year it was! With over 2,000 kids sharing cultures from all over the world, they paraded through the park and ended up inside the Fort. This extravaganza was a site to behold. Discussions are already taking place for next year's event!

Weddings will once again resume in May showing off the wonderful work of Maintenance in refurbishing the **bandstand**.